

**Entelechy:  
Potentiality has become an actuality**

BY

Aimee M. Howard

Submitted to the graduate degree program in Design  
and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts.

---

Chairperson

---

---

**Date Defended:** Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup> 2009

The Thesis Committee for Aimee M. Howard certifies  
that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

**Entelechy:  
Potentiality has become an actuality**

Committee:

---

Chairperson

---

---

Date approved: Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup> 2009

## Table of Contents

Observations.....	Pg. 1
Diagnosis.....	Pg. 2
Symptoms.....	Pg. 3-4
Remedy.....	Pg. 5
Follow-Up Care.....	Pg. 6
Practitioner's Notes.....	Pg. 7
References.....	Pg. 8-9
Images.....	Pg. 10-25
Image Titles.....	Pg. 26-27

**Observations:**  
(of a physical and cultural nature)

Our contemporary Western world can be adequately circumscribed with the saying, 'knowledge is power.' Society is evermore dependent on progressive science and technology, particularly in the realm of medicine. A primary goal in advancing these technological capabilities is to unveil the many nuances of the human body. Thus, we can often decelerate or even reverse its natural course of deterioration.

NOTES: *In many ways, these goals are being met and have lead to new modes of healing that often bring an extension of life. Such scientific progress enables us to increasingly believe in the explain-ability of the world.'*



## Diagnosis:

(description of disorder)

Our inherent drive to suspend the body in a state of perfection directly rejects the undeniably obvious imperfection, vulnerability, and temporality which characterize being human. Thus, when illness and disease permeate our lives, advancements in science, technology, and medicine are rendered seemingly incomplete. Despite volumes of medical information the most primal of questions, beginning with *why?*, remain too complicated and unanswerable, even for science.

NOTES: *Figures one (1) through two (2) illustrate an extraction of knowledge that creates a state of internal physical perfection.*

Symptoms:  
(most prominent and inescapable)

Symptom One: Disconnection

Accompanied by secondary symptoms:

- a. Isolation
- b. Dislocation
- c. Phantom Self Syndrome

Disease inherently propagates literal and emotional dislocation within the body. Ailing parts of the body are isolated for proper examination and treatment. Patients are dislocated from their place of residence and often experience Phantom Self Syndrome as a result of their daily routine being interrupted and often altogether aborted. Those suffering from a progressive illness oftentimes also experience disconnections from loved ones. Both the ailing and their relations find that 'acting normal' becomes a seemingly impossible task. Thus, for fear of projecting words or deeds of a non-retraceable nature, both parties often willingly opt to disconnect. In most cases, this type of detachment usually occurs at the onset of disease, although in some cases, it can persist through the entire course of an illness.

NOTES: *Advancements in medical science have radically altered both the experience of illness and the bodily experience itself.<sup>2</sup> In Figures seven (f) through nine (q), severe cases of isolation and disconnection are present. Each organ has been removed from its original context within the body and safely contained within the protective boundaries of modern medical knowledge. Through such isolation, these organs, normally subject to degradation, are made available for constant analysis, which facilitates (un)natural preservation.*

---

<sup>2</sup> *Devices and Desires*

## Symptom Two: Incomprehension

Accompanied by secondary symptoms:

- a. Muddled explanations
- b. Obscure thought and rational
- c. Perpetual state of oblivion

In attempts to gain diagnostic clarity and understanding, physicians and scientists often section the body into manageable parts for closer analysis. The need to decipher and control the body is inherent in trying to sustain perfection. For the patient, however, disease often generates a multitude of questions that cannot be answered by those conducting the analysis. Understanding the how and why of disease may at first seem inconceivable. Eventually some comprehension may be gained if the analysis is pursued outside the confines of science.

NOTES: *Examples of said incomprehension may be seen in Figures three (3) through six (6). Books, which serve as intellectual tools to gain understanding, have been obscured and re-contextualized to achieve a new perceptive on this transient existence.*

Remedy:  
(for achieving veneration)

The onset of disease is marked principally by a state of confusion. However, a new form of understanding can eventually arise, one that manifests an incredible awe for the human body and spirit. Just as a surgeon understands the innermost workings of the body with time and experience, living in and around illness, one can begin to comprehend the context and meaning of this earthly existence. These firsthand experiences with illness bring a new intimacy and significance to life.

NOTES: *Figures three (3) through six (6) also illustrate reverence for life through idealized facsimiles of the body in a healthy state.*

### Follow-Up Care:

(for those directly and indirectly affected)

Emotional disorders often arise in conjunction with physical disorders and can persist even after the physical ailments have been remedied. When emotional turmoil is experienced with enough ferocity, it can physically exhibit itself within the body. Fortunately, advancements in medical science have lead to the development of tools that alleviate such manifestations. These apparatuses are user-friendly and designed for in-home use as directed.

NOTES: *Figures nine (9) through nineteen (19) reference the medical community's acknowledgement, diagnosis and treatment of physically manifested emotional disorders (p.m.e.d.s).*

## Practitioner's Remarks:

The transient quality of human life is what makes our earthly existence meaningful and perpetually valuable. Yet when subject to deterioration, we often dispose ourselves to extravagant medical procedures in hope of being 'cured.' Such experiences often breed new physical and emotional disorders, and it becomes increasingly easy to lose sight of what can be gained through the inevitable act of suffering.

NOTES: *"I do not believe that sheer suffering teaches. If suffering alone taught, all the world would be wise, since everyone suffers. To suffering must be added mourning, understanding, patience, love, openness and the willingness to remain vulnerable."<sup>3</sup>*

---

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Addison

## References:

- Gamwell, Lynn. Exploring the Invisible Art, Science, and the Spiritual. New York: Princeton UP, 2005.
- Gaspar, Monica. Foreign Bodies: Christoph Zellweger. Barcelona: Actar, 2007.
- Kac, Eduardo. Signs of Life Bio Art and Beyond (Leonardo Books). New York: The MIT P, 2006.
- Lupton, Deborah. Medicine as culture : illness, disease and the body in western societies. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Ltd, 1994.
- Mattingly, Cheryl, and Linda C. Garro, eds. Narrative and the Cultural Construction of Illness and Healing. New York: University of California P, 2000.
- Mazzio, Carla, and David Hillman. The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Reiser, Stanley Joel. Medicine and the Reign of Technology. New York: Cambridge UP, 1981.

- Sandelowski, Margarete. Devices and Desires Gender, Technology, and American Nursing (Studies in Social Medicine). New York: The University of North Carolina P, 2000.
- Scarry, Elaine. The Body in Pain The Making and Unmaking of the World. New York: Oxford UP, USA, 1987.
- Sontag, Susan. Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors. New york: Picador, 2001.





Fig. 1



Fig. 2

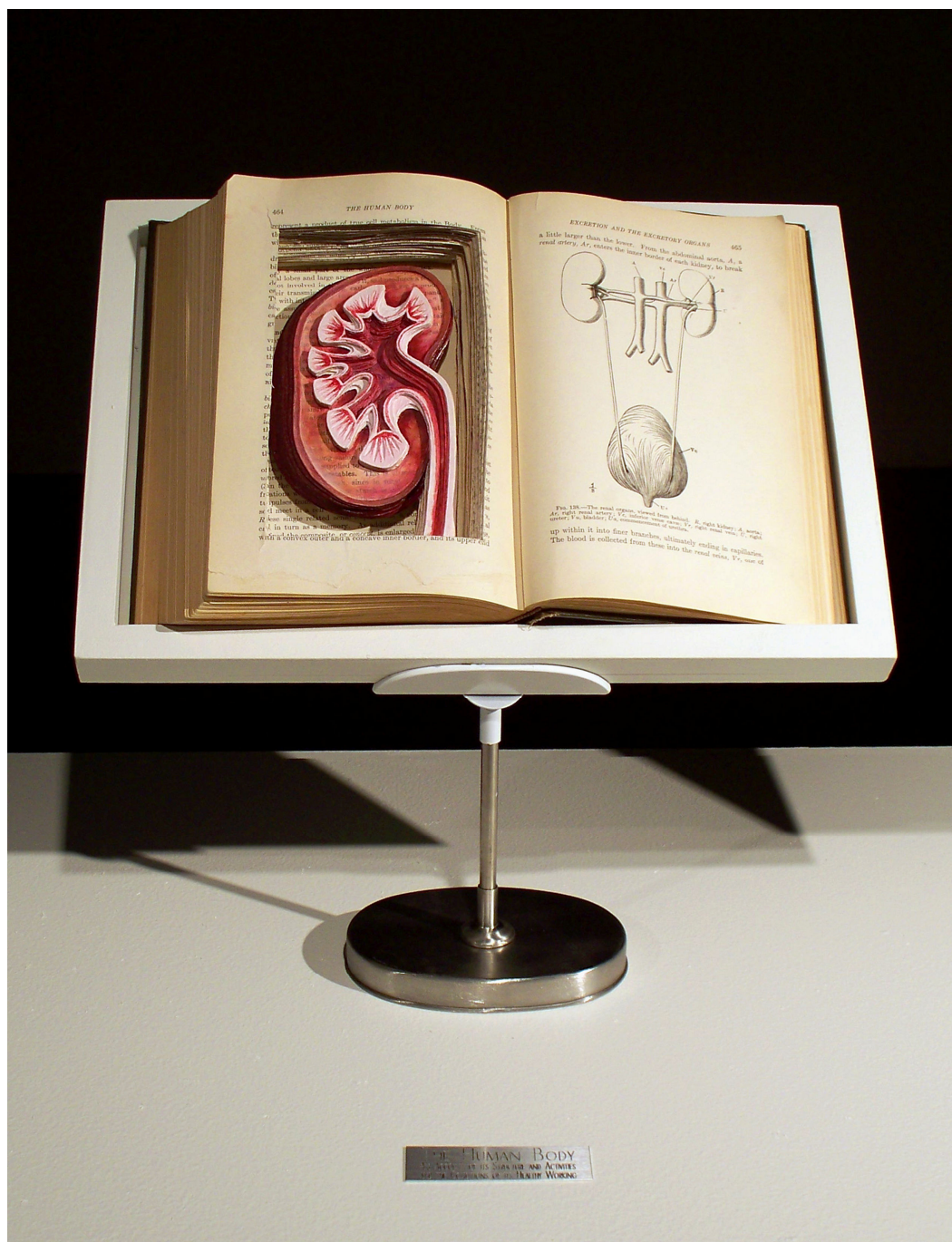


Fig. 3



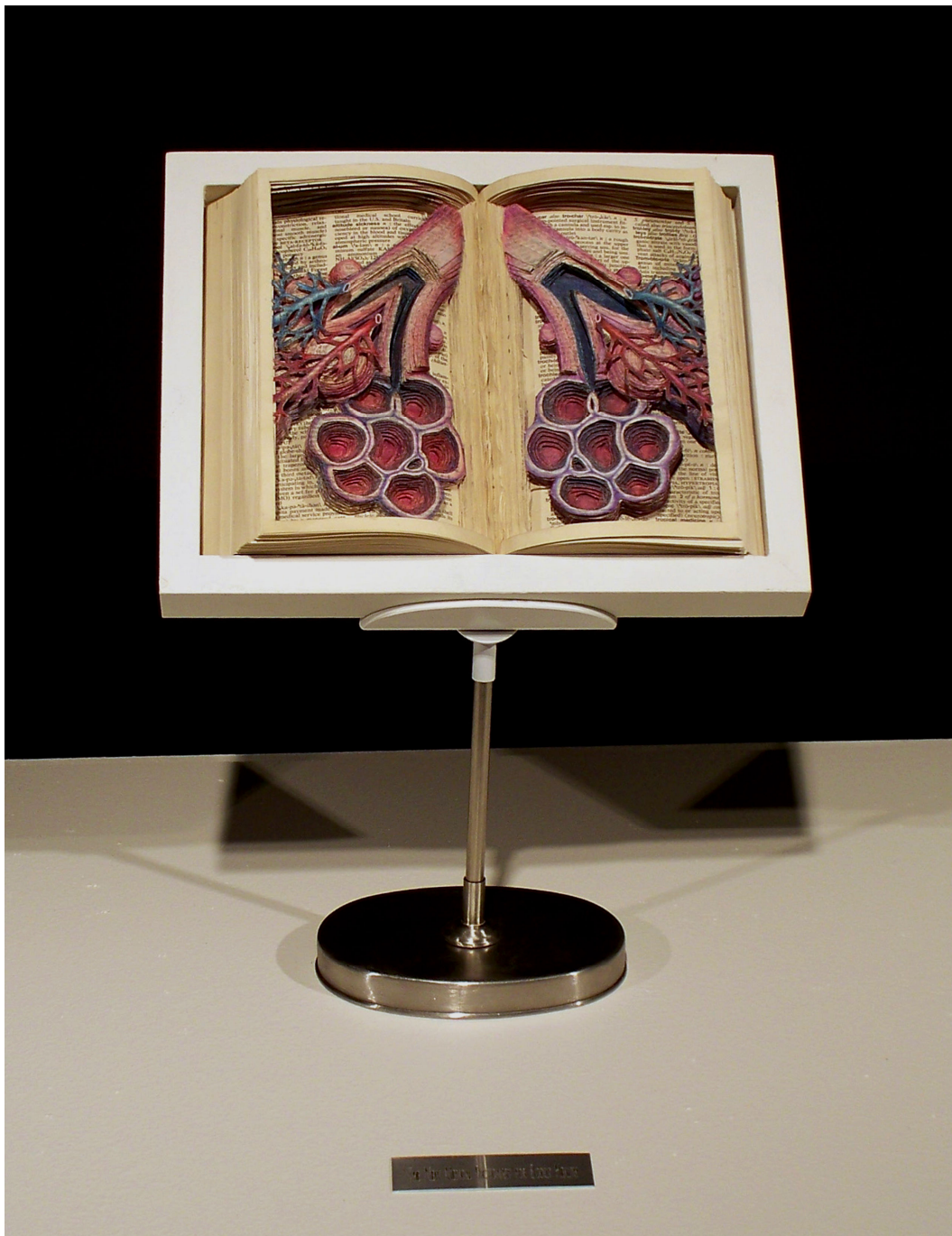
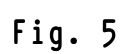


Fig. 4





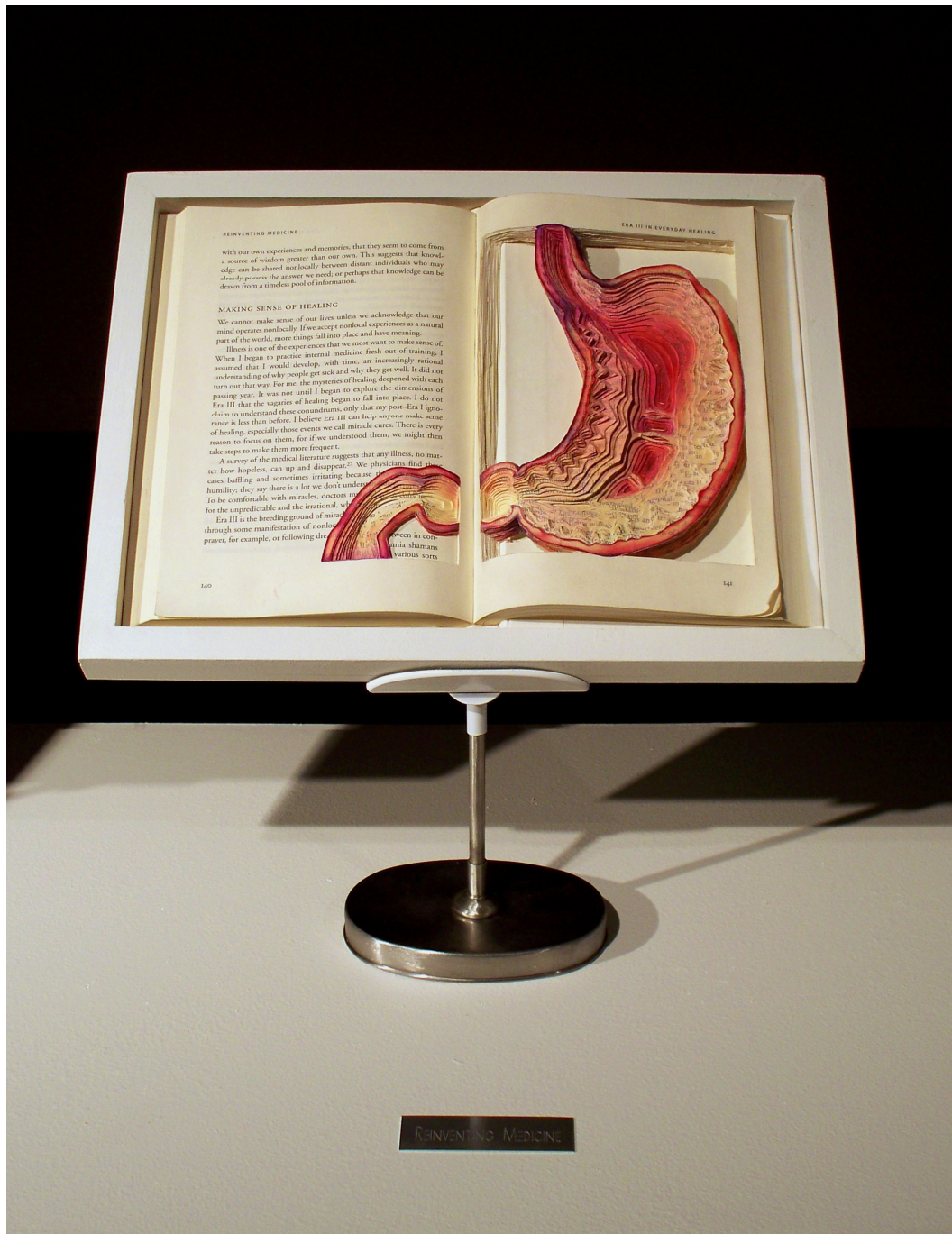


Fig. 6

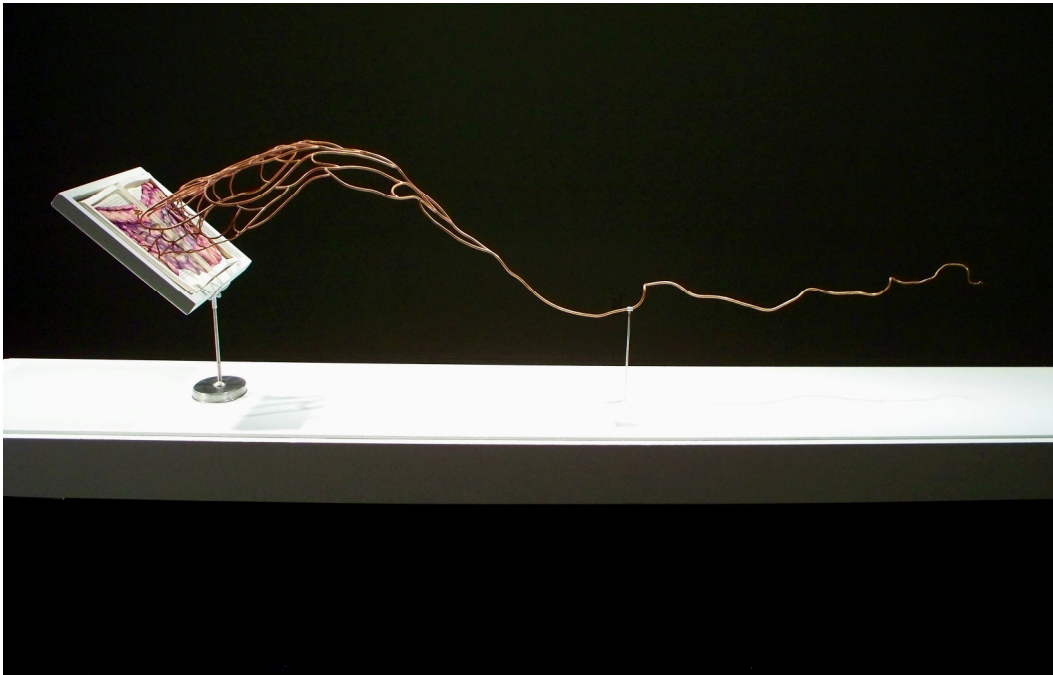


Fig. 7

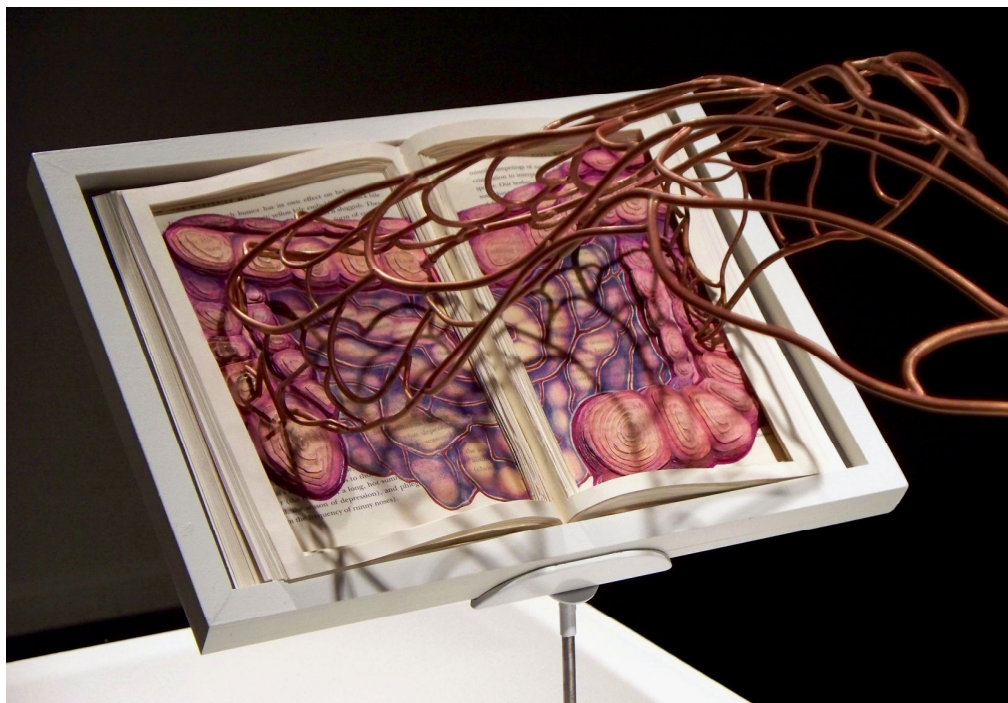


Fig. 8





Fig. 9

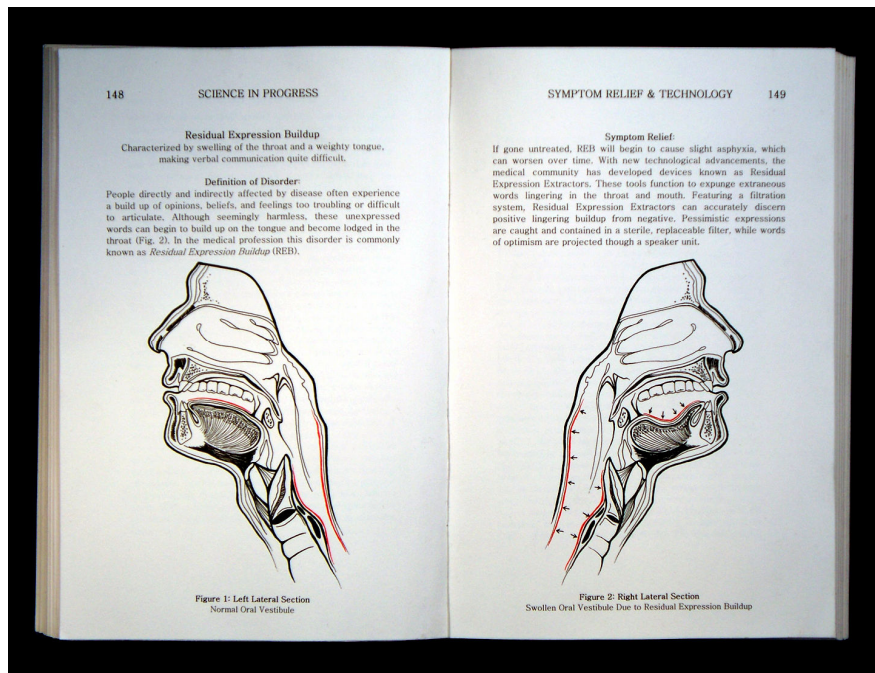


Fig. 10

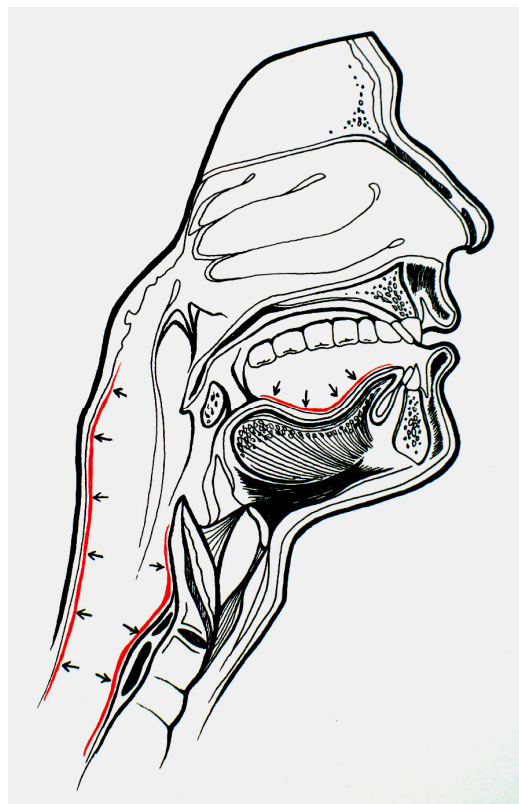






Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

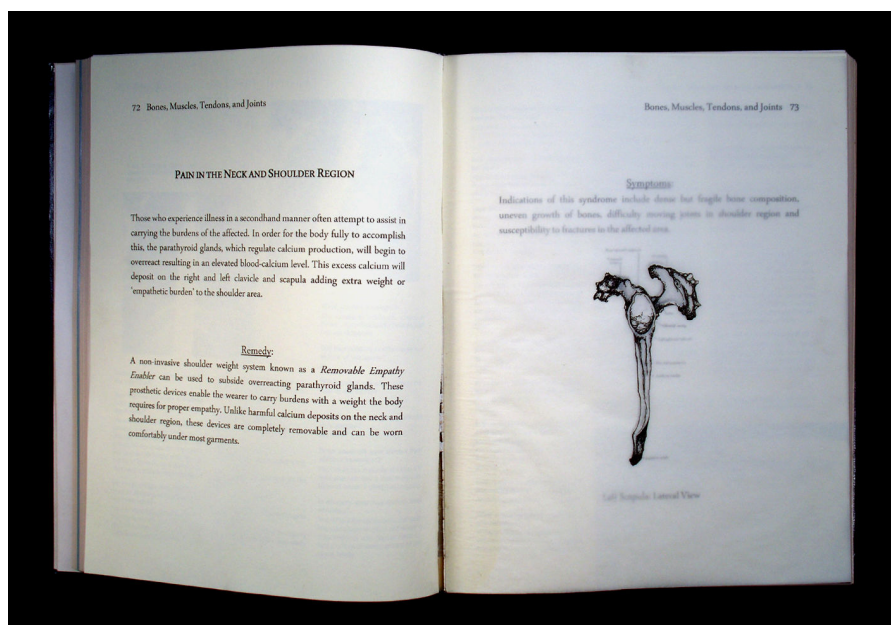


Fig. 14

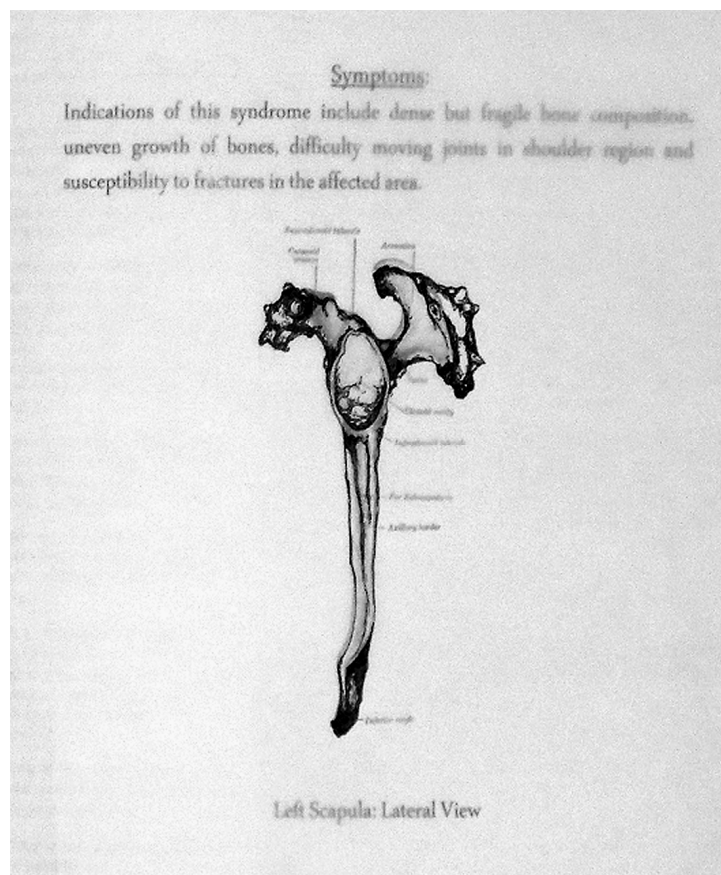






Fig. 15





Fig. 16





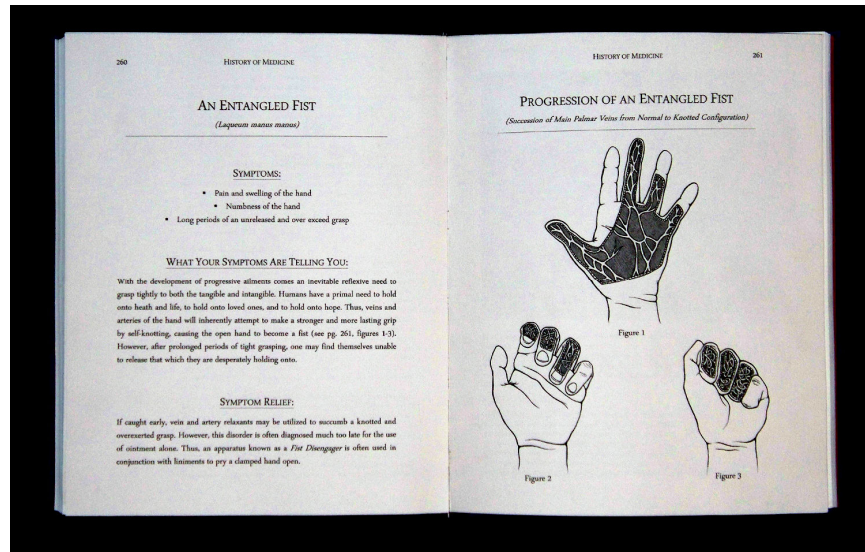


Fig. 17

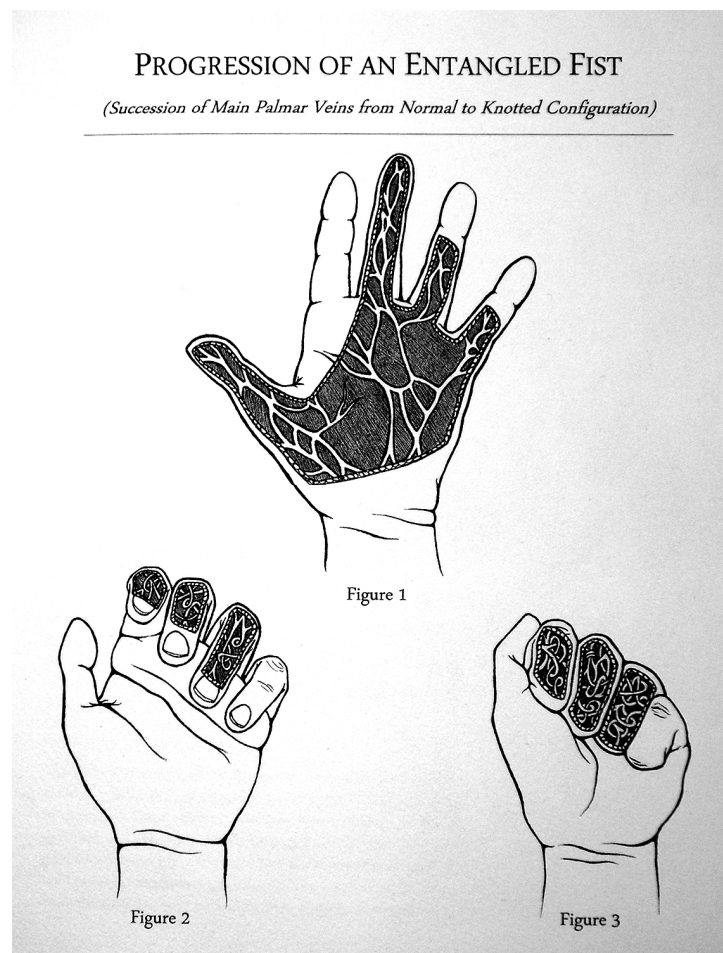




Fig. 18

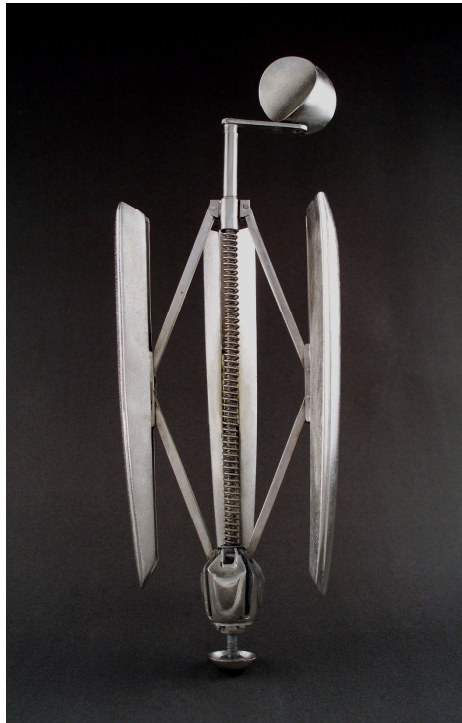


Fig. 19





## Image Titles:

### Fig. 1 and Fig. 2:

*Entelechy: Potentiality has become an actuality*  
(Instillation View)

### Fig. 3:

*The Human Body: An Account of its Structure and  
Activities and the Conditions of its Healthy Working*  
(Kidney)

### Fig. 4:

*New Medical Dictionary for Family Health*  
(Alveoli of the Lungs)

### Fig. 5:

*A Treatise on Physiology and Hygiene* (Heart)

### Fig. 6:

*Reinventing Medicine* (Stomach)

### Fig. 7 and Fig. 8:

*The Mysteries Within* (Small and Large Intestine)

### Fig. 9:

*Entelechy: Potentiality has become an actuality*  
(Instillation View)

### Fig. 10:

*Residual Expression Buildup*

### Fig. 11, Fig. 12 and Fig. 13:

*Residual Expression Extractor*

**Fig. 14:**

*Empathic Swelling Affecting Bones of the Shoulder Region*

**Fig. 15 and Fig. 16:**

*Empathy Enabler*

**Fig. 17:**

*An Entangled Fist*

**Fig. 18 and Fig. 19:**

*Fist Disengager*